United Nations

Press Release

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council unanimously agrees on modalities for United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission in accordance with Secretary-General's recommendation.

- Secretary-General appoints Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan to coordinate United Nations relief programme for Iraq, Kuwait and Turkish and Iranian border areas; appoints also Eric Suy to lead United Nations mission to estimate needs of refugees in northern Iraq.

- World Health Organization appeals for $4.1 million for emergency health assistance to Kuwait.

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The Security Council this afternoon unanimously adopted a resolution setting the modalities for the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) to be sent to the demilitarized zone between the two countries.

Such an operation was called for in the Council's resolution 687, adopted on 3 April, setting terms for a formal cease-fire in the Gulf conflict.

The mission, to consist eventually of up to 1,440 armed and unarmed military personnel provided by Member States, will monitor the Khor Abdullah waterway as well as a 200-kilometre-long demilitarized zone. It will also aim to deter boundary violations and observe any hostile or potentially hostile actions, using force only in self-defence. The mission will cost an estimated $83 million for the first six months, to be borne by Member States through special assessments.

The Governments of Iraq and Kuwait had both indicated their acceptance of the Secretary-General's plan. They will be relied upon to cooperate fully with the Mission in granting freedom of movement, requiring all traffic in the zone to be routed past Mission observation posts and limiting their citizens' right to bear arms in the zone.

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For information media—not an official record

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar today announced the appointment of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan as his Executive Delegate to coordinate a United Nations inter-agency humanitarian programme for Iraq, Kuwait and the Turkish and Iranian border areas.

Prince Sadruddin was the High Commissioner for Refugees from 1966 to 1978, and shortly after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, he was named by the Secretary-General to mobilize multinational humanitarian assistance to the area, a post from which he resigned about two months ago.

A United Nations official told correspondents today that Prince Sadruddin would be a "catalyst" to highlight humanitarian needs, and stimulate a generous response from the international community. He would keep the Secretary-General informed about humanitarian issues relating to the Gulf crisis by constant monitoring and reporting.

In a separate development, Iraq has protested against the dropping of relief supplies to Iraqi civilians by the United States and the United Kingdom, calling the action an infringement on national sovereignty. In a letter to the President of the Security Council, Iraqi Foreign Minister Ahmed Hussein said the air operations constituted direct interference in the internal affairs of Iraq. The relief should have been provided through the Iraqi authorities and the Iraqi Red Crescent.

Meanwhile, Japan has informed the United Nations that it has donated $10 million to provide emergency relief to Kurdish and other displaced persons from Iraq. The announcement followed an appeal by the United Nations Disaster Relief Office.

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In a further development related to the aftermath of the Gulf crisis, the Secretary-General today appointed Eric Suy, a national of Belgium, to lead a United Nations mission to estimate the humanitarian needs of the refugees currently trapped in northern Iraq.

A former Legal Counsel of the United Nations and the former Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Mr. Suy is currently serving as Counsellor to the Foreign Minister of Belgium.

Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar told news correspondents today the mission would have to go to Turkey and Iran as well, and he hoped that it would be under way before the end of this week. The Secretary-General said he was ready to implement any resolution that the Security Council may adopt on the situation of the Kurds in northern Iraq as he was particularly concerned about their situation. Asked about the possible creation of a "safe haven" or an "enclave" for the Kurds and Shi'ites in Iraq, the Secretary-General said the 1948 Geneva Convention on Genocide was being used in current discussions in the Council as a basis to justify the creation of such an "enclave".

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The World Health Organization (WHO) today launched an appeal for $4.1 million to finance a three-month emergency health plan for war-damaged Kuwait. The plan was drawn up by the Kuwait Ministry for Public Health and a WHO mission which has just returned to Geneva.

According to a United Nations press officer in Geneva, the WHO Director-General, Dr. Hiroshi Nakajima, said the emergency plan was aimed at helping Kuwait to meet the dual challenge of rehabilitating its health-care system and of conquering the daunting threats posed by air, sea and water pollution and by the widespread presence in the country of land mines and other explosives.

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